



The Oasis

The Seasonal Newsletter of Prince William Forest Park

Springtime “B-loop” fire viewed as a success!

From March 27-April 4th, over 70 wildland firefighters from across the country fought and eventually controlled a 318-acre wildland fire that began in the B-loop of Oak Ridge Campground. Though no structures were destroyed and no serious injuries occurred, the fire cost approximately \$125,000.

The 318 acre “B-loop” fire was started by a camper in Oak Ridge Campground and cost over \$125,000.

As we move further and further into the summer camping season, a look back on this fire may shed some light on the importance of fire safety during your visit to Prince William Forest Park and other outdoor areas.

In the late afternoon of March 27th, Jim Pieper, a biological technician at Prince William Forest Park reported the fire to law enforcement personnel. National Park Service firefighters immediately established incident command and began an initial phase of attack on the fire. They aggressively fought the fire late into the night of the 27th, with the primary objective of



The dry spring and heavy leaf cover on the forest floor created perfect conditions for this hot, slow-moving fire. Photo courtesy: NPS.



Over 70 firefighters from various federal and local agencies battled the 318 acre fire. Here, Park Ranger Chris Derman is raking a fire line to stop the spread of the blaze. Photo courtesy: NPS.

protecting Oak Ridge Campground. Early the next day National Park Service firefighters began arriving from around the region and National Forest Service Crews began arriving from California. These federal firefighters began building a fire line along the southern edge of the fire on scenic drive with help from Prince William County Fire and Rescue.

The goal over the next two days was to deprive the fire of fuel to prevent it from spreading. A fire line (a path cleared of combustible materials) was cut through the forest to act as a “road block” to the fire. Thanks to quick and thorough work by firefighters, this task was completed and the fire was officially “contained,” or surrounded by a fire line, on March 30th. It would take another week before park officials could officially declare the fire “controlled,” or completely extinguished.

Due to the extremely dry conditions of late March 2006, this fire burned hotter and faster than expected, showing far more active behavior than firefighters typically expect to see in the east.

Due to the extremely dry conditions, this fire burned hotter and faster than expected.

In western states it is common to see fire jump to the tops of trees, “torching out” as firefighters will call it, yet this is seldom seen in eastern hardwood forests such as those at Prince William Forest Park. In eastern hardwood forests, fires typically tend to “creep” through leaf litter on the forest floor. During the B-Loop fire, however, it was common to see Holly, Mountain Laurel, and even some

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Rte. 234 Environmental Assessment

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was released for comment on June 1. The purpose of the EA is to examine alternatives for providing access to the park from the Rte. 234 corridor. Each of the alternatives is evaluated on a range of subject areas including environmental, historical, and visitor experience impacts.

Based on the analysis of the impacts, the National Park Service (NPS) preferred alternative is for a bicycle/pedestrian access from Rte. 234 at Waterway Drive. Essentially, this would provide a parking lot to accommodate 50 – 100 vehicles at a trail head. An improved surface trail would connect to the existing Spriggs Lane Fire Road and Burma Fire Road, providing bicycle and pedestrian access to Park Scenic Drive.

The public comment period for the EA closed on July 15. The NPS will now evaluate and analyze all of the comments. A final EA will be issued pending a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The NPS will seek funding to begin the actual design process, and then funding for actual construction. The design and construction process may still be several years in the making.

If you would like to receive notifications of public comment periods in the future, contact the park at 703-221-7181.

National Parks America Tour '06

This sample text type is set in 8.5/12.75 NPS Rawlinson. It can be set manually or by using the type style labeled "Text" in the Styles menu. *Italics* must be set manually by selecting the font NPS Rawlinson, italicized, **bold** type by selecting NPS Rawlinson, bolded.

This article runs in three columns, following the structure of the underlying grid. Text columns are separated by the a standard gutter width of .167 inches. A space of .265 inches separates headlines (such as "Text-head A" or "Box-head A") from body text. A full line space separates paragraphs of text from each other, as demonstrated here.

This is dummy text—an ironic history for the biographer of Abraham Lincoln—for Christopher Memminger, who built the main residence around 1838, had served from 1861 to 1864 as Secretary of the Confederate Treasury. The second occupant was textile tycoon Ellison Smyth who named it Connemara to honor his Irish ancestry. Smyth's heirs sold it to the Sandburgs. The Sandburgs moved from Michigan with their three daughters, two grandchildren, a library of more than 14,000 volumes, and the Chikaming goat herd. Mrs. Sandburg bred her prize-winning goats and ran the farm business. Margaret helped her father, attended to the library, and worked in her flower garden. Janet helped on

the farm, which was especially active when Helga and her children, John Carl and Paula, lived here. Until her second marriage and move from Connema, Helga managed the dairy operation with her mother. The grandchildren rode horses and played in the



The Girl Scouts continue their long tradition of service work by helping to repair the banks of South Fork Quantico Creek, where unwanted foot traffic has increased erosion. Photo courtesy: NPS.

woods and pastures.

- Bulleted lists should be set using the type style labeled "Text-bulleted lists" in the Styles menu.
- The square bullet can be made by typing an "n" set in 6.5/12.75 Zapf Dingbats.
- A full line space separates bulleted items from paragraphs.



Volunteers from United States Marine Corps help with some heavy lifting. Photo courtesy: NPS.



Ranger Michael Smith provides direction to cub scouts rehabilitating Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground. Photo courtesy: NPS.

Regional Directors and Park Staff Celebrate Completion of \$5,000,000 Waterline Project

It's completed! Approximately 14 miles of new waterline and pipes have been installed throughout the park. Maybe you have noticed a difference?

The new system delivers more water pressure than the previous system in the park. The previous system consisted mainly of the system installed in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). That system served us well for many, many years, but was showing its age with frequent breakdowns and troubles. The new system should deliver reliably for many years to come.

This project was made possible by former NPS National Capital Regional (NCR) Director Terry Carlstrom. Mr. Carlstrom saw the need for this project approximately ten years ago. Mr. Carlstrom boldly proposed utilizing approximately seven million dollars of NCR Recreation Fee Demonstration dollars for this project. The park staff would also like to ex-



Current NPS National Capitol Regional Director, Joe Lawler, Retired National Capitol Regional Director, Terry Carlstrom; and Superintendent Bob Hickman at the waterline completion celebration. Photo courtesy: NPS.

tend our thanks to the project contractor, W.C. Spratt of Fredericksburg, Virginia, for all of their effort and dedication to ensure the successful outcome of this project



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Prince William Forest Park is an oasis of natural beauty and human history located only 35 miles south of Washington, D.C. This 15,000 piedmont forest is criss-crossed by 37 miles of hiking trails, 21 miles of bicycle accessible trails, and countless miles of the meandering Quantico Creek.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

New items added to park store

The most recent addition to the park store is a new display for the National Audubon Society and Wild Republic plush birds. When squeezed, these stuffed animals make the actual call of the birds they represent, making them the perfect gift for the young birder. Another new bookstore addition is our camp store. Campers in need of Sting-Eze, tent pegs, tent repair kits, ponchos and batteries no longer have to leave the park.

Hikers can also pick up quality hiking staffs from Hike America. Each handcrafted staff is made from Chestnut saplings. A hiking staff can reduce the stress on knees and backs, increase traction and allow hikers to test uncertain terrain while hiking.

Updated topographic maps are also now available for purchase. The previous maps were created in 1984. The new maps were produced in 1997 and reflect the changes in the park over 13 years. In addition to these new items we are always adding new books. Stop by the visitor center and check out the new and improved Eastern National bookstore.



Readers Voice!

Dear Ranger Laura,
My husband John and I took a walk through the park on Sunday 7 May for his birthday with our miniature schnauzer, Charlie. We parked at the lot at the Mawavi Road, and took the road to the South Lake Trail toward the CCC bridge.

Coming up one of the hills near the lake, on the right side of the trail, I spotted a lady's slipper growing along the side of the path. I had not seen one since I was a child in Vermont. My mother was the one who showed me my first lady slipper, because it was growing in our back yard and she wanted my friends and I to be careful not to trample it.



The Pink Lady Slipper, *Cypripedium acaule*.
Photo courtesy: Colleen Borley.

My husband and I love the park and we both agree that the park is a gem and we are lucky to have it so near our home.

Sincerely,
Colleen Borley

*Colleen, John and Charlie,
Thank you sharing your encounter with the pink lady slipper. This beautiful wildflower is one of the 360 wildflower species found in Prince William Forest Park. It is also one of the largest orchids native to this area.*

Your wonderful story demonstrates the important lesson to "leave only footprints and take only photographs." Keep your camera ready, and we will look for your submissions to this year's annual pass photography contest.

Sincerely,
Ranger Laura

Make your voice heard! Share your experiences in Prince William Forest Park in the Reader's Corner. Photographs and recollections can be e-mailed to Laura_Cohen@nps.gov.

Youth Conservation Corp Program Underway at Park

Prince William Forest Park is once again hosting the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) work team. For over 25 years, youth from the local area have worked on trails, helped to rehabilitate historic cabins, constructed boardwalks, participated in environmental education programs, and much more. In addition, participants in this program gain experience in environmental stewardship and community service. They learn teamwork, safety, leadership and resource evaluation while building organizational and decision making skills. Applicants work a standard 40-hour work week and receive minimum wage. Appli-

cants must be citizens of the United States and must be 15 years of age by the start of the program, and not turn 19 years of age until the program is over. This year's program started on June 26 and will end August 18, 2006. Six local youth were selected from over 30 applicants. This program has been and continues to be positive for Prince William Forest Park and the community. Maybe next summer you would be interested in working as a YCC in the National Park Service? Information will be on our website in March.

Inventory of 153 Historic Structures is Complete!

From mid- March to mid- June, park Museum Technician Judy Volonoski visited, inspected, and evaluated each of the 153 historic structures located within Prince William Forest Park. These structures are inventoried in the National Park Services List of Classified Structures (LCS).

The LCS is used to report to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior. The reports judge the accomplishments and accountability of parks and rate how the parks are inventorying and caring for their historic properties. There are currently about 27,000 National Park Service structures on the LCS.

This year all national parks with LCS listings in the National Park Service National Capitol Region are inspecting and updating their LCS records. To complete this undertaking in Prince William Forest Park, Judy updated the LCS record's 38 required fields and included photographs and GIS locations and other pertinent information.

Prince William Forest Parks has 153 structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the park's 5 historic districts: Goodwill Historic District, CC#1; Mawavi Historic District, CC#2; Orenda Historic District, CC#3; Pleasant Historic District, CC#4; Cabin Branch Mine Historic District.

The four cabin camps are listed on the national register as being "...representative of one of FDR's most successful human conservation efforts, while the rustic architecture the men constructed is representative of the rising popularity of parks, organized camping and motoring to and from natural settings that was facilitated by automobiles and the boom in park and parkway construction."

The Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine is listed on the national register under Criterion A: "Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." "The Cabin Branch pyrite mine was the major supporting industry of the former colonial port city of Dumfries, Virginia, for about 30 years. Over this period, hundreds of local residents depended on the mine for their livelihood. Tours of both the Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine and Cabin Camps are offered throughout the summer. For more information, please visit our website at www.nps.gov/prwi.



The Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine. Photo: NPS

Friends of Prince William Forest Park

The Chopawamsic Cycle Challenge

On September 10, 2006, volunteers, bicyclists and park staff will join forces to raise money in support of "visitor activities and historic preservation projects" in Prince William Forest Park. The Friends of Prince William Forest Park will challenge local cyclists to spend a day riding through the park on over eight miles of paved and gravel roads.

The Friends Group will welcome donations! A \$25.00 donation will entitle riders to a complimentary event t-shirt and the opportunity to put their name in a drawing for door prizes. Sponsorship funds are also welcomed, but not required:

"If an individual rider raises \$100 or over, the registration donation will be waived.

"Any rider who raises \$100-\$499 will receive a one-year Prince William Forest Park pass.

"Any rider who raises \$500 or more will receive a one-year National Parks pass, good at all National Parks.

A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. There is one rest stop along the route which will offer bathrooms, water and snacks provided by Woodbridge SDA Church.

Through the generous contributions of several local sponsors including MORE, Shirt Art, Inc., The Training Connection, Inc., Trips for Kids, Studio 13, REI, Olde Towne Bicycles, Walmart, Dynamic Enterprise Solutions, Inc., The Young Marines Long & Foster Real Estate Inc., and RGS Title, participants will have an opportunity to win awards and door prizes. Complimentary technical support for bikes will be provided by Village Ski and Bikes and EMT by New Baltimore Vol. Fire & Rescue (Fauquier County).

"This year's Chopawamsic Cycle Challenge features a new route which will start and finish at the Pine Grove Picnic area," comments Kathy Wentworth Drahosz, President of the Friends Group, "our co-sponsors MORE (Scott Scudamore) and Trips for Kids will be serving up their signature lunch of burgers and fries!"



Park Ranger George Rabtzwow, Jr. helps round up riders in the 2005 Chopawamsic Cycle Challenge. Photo courtesy: NPS.

The Friends of Prince William Forest Park was formed in 1989 to help preserve and enhance the park's natural and cultural resources, monitor activities that affect the park's ecosystem, and provide citizens a forum to discuss issues and decisions affecting the park. Meetings are held at the park on the second Sunday of the month and begin at 2:00 p.m. Along with a business meeting, the day typically includes special speakers and/or organized recreational activities. Membership is open to anyone who supports the mission of the group.

For more information, about the 2006 CCC please visit the Friends web site at www.fpwfp.org.

The 2007 Annual Pass Photo Contest

Will your photo be on the next Prince William Forest Park Annual Pass?

Friends of Prince William Forest Park is pleased to announce the 2nd annual Photography Contest for the Prince William Forest Park Annual Pass (\$20). The winning photograph will be featured on the 2007 Prince William Forest Park Annual Pass along with the name



The 2006 Prince William Forest Park Annual Pass showing last year's prize winning photograph of South Fork Quantico Creek. Photo courtesy: NPS.

The theme of this year's contest is "Honoring History." All photographs must be taken within the boundary of Prince William Forest Park and should include a historical theme that highlights one of the many historic resources within the park such as: cabin camps, cemeteries, and roads and bridges.

For more information about the photography contest or if you are interested in learning more about the Friends of Prince William Forest Park, please call Kathy Wentworth-Drahosz at 703-551-0734 or visit their website at www.fpwfp.org.

Submissions can be dropped off at the Prince William Forest Park visitor center. The visitor center is located just 1 mile from Interstate 95, off of Exit 150 (VA Route 619 - Joplin Road). All entries must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 13, 2006 and are limited to two entries per person. For a complete list of rules, visit the Friends of Prince William Forest Park website at www.fpwfp.org.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

August 13, 2006

Bike Maintenance Workshop
2:00 pm

September 10, 06

Signature Fund Raising Event:
Chopawamsic Cycle Challenge
2:00 pm

October 8, 2006

Wilderness Workshop
2:00 pm

November 19, 06

Park's 70th Anniversary Celebration
2:00 pm

December 10, 06

No Meeting—Happy Holidays!!

The Friends

of Prince William Forest Park



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Fight the Bite! Avoid Mosquito Bites to Avoid Infection...

Arm yourself with knowledge to “fight the bite” from the dreaded mosquito. First, limit your outdoor activity during dawn and dusk, as these are peak biting times for many species of mosquitoes. Second, when you do need to go outdoors, wear long-sleeves, long pants, and socks. Finally, apply an insect repellent containing 30% DEET for any areas of exposed skin or applying it on thin clothing when you go outdoors. Some non-DEET containing insect repellents have actually been shown to attract insects. Please note that any DEET containing products **MUST NOT** be used on children and as with any product, please be sure to follow all application instructions.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in still, standing water. In fact, one mosquito can lay more than 300 eggs in a cupful of water. In your garden, this means that you should empty standing water from flower pots, buckets, barrels, etc. and change the water in pet dishes or bird baths. You can even drill holes in backyard items such as tire swings so water drains out on its own. Keep your children’s wading pools empty and on their sides when not in use. In other outdoor areas such as parks, avoid areas with standing water and prepare yourself with insect spray.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the chance that any one person is going to become ill from a single mosquito bite remains low. The risk of severe illness or death is highest for people over 50 years old, although people of all ages can become ill. Fighting mosquito bites reduces your risks of contracting mosquito borne diseases. For more information visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov.



The Oasis, the official seasonal newsletter of Prince William Forest Park, is released in spring, summer, fall and winter.

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“B-loop” fire responsible for new forest growth

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hardwood trees “torching out.” This indicates a very hot fire, which we will see evidence of in blackened trees for years to come.

Within the few months since the fire, evidence is already showing that fire is often responsible for “rebirth” in the forest. It cleans out underbrush and dead organic matter and enriches the soil. This can lead to positive and negative effects.

For example, a 50 -acre stand of white pine trees was engulfed by the fire. Though some damage may have been done to the standing trees, white pine seeds are serotinous – they germinate after fire. Park staff will monitor this stand of trees in the upcoming years to study the effects of the fire.

Today, most of the understory of the burn area, now open to more sunlight and rain, is green with the new growth of trees, shrubs, and flowers. However, despite some of its positive effects, the “B-loop” fire was a costly and dangerous situation for the National Park Service and the firefighters who fought the blaze. An investigation into the fire by National Park Service Law Enforcement Officials determined that the fire was human-caused, and a criminal case is still pending.

To prevent such fires in the future, park staff will make extensive efforts this camping season to prevent another fire and you can help! Please obey all signs and ensure that your fire is “dead-out” before you check-out. Thank you for camping at Prince William Forest Park.